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30 March 1951

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Intelligence Support for Psychological Warfare

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PRESENT:

[Redacted]

Mr. Jackson

Mr. Wisner

Mr. Armstrong

Mr. Reber

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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25X1 1. Admiral Stevens opened the discussion by stating the issue as he saw it. It is his belief, and he believed he represented also the views of [Redacted] who was unavoidably absent, that the CIA should provide intelligence support for the National Psychological Strategy Board. This he said was necessary because of the need to achieve unbiased intelligence which could not be provided by one of the departments. While he recognized that this remark was directed mainly at the State Department, since its intelligence unit would provide much of the psychological intelligence support, he intended his remarks to extend generally and illustrated this by reference to the Air Force providing intelligence regarding the use of the Atom Bomb which presumably stems from its custody of the Bomb itself. He did not believe the Air Force could produce reliable intelligence on such matters.

2. Mr. Jackson responded by indicating that the CIA had not been directed to provide psychological (political, sociological, cultural) intelligence support to anyone, in fact it had been expressly directed not to do this in the NSC directive which stemmed from the Dulles Report. He reviewed the responsibilities of the Agency and summarized that insofar as there was required an intelligence appreciation which transcended the interests and capabilities of the various departments the CIA would be responsible for issuing, in collaboration with the other agencies a National Intelligence Estimate. Existing machinery for this would be as properly and readily available for a subject in this field as in any field. Furthermore, in response to additional questions he indicated that a lack of performance by, say, the State Department should be dealt with by complaints direct from the consumers to the State Department. While the Director of Central Intelligence at the present time had no powers of investigation into the administration of the various intelligence agencies he could invite the attention of the Secretary of State (or the head of another agency if necessary) to the shortcomings which were attributed by the consumers of their product.

3. Specific attention was directed to two illustrations:

a. The psychological reactions of the Russian people to the use of the Atomic Bomb? It was suggested by Mr. Jackson that this

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seemed on the surface to be appropriate for a National Intelligence Estimate though a decision on that could flow only from an examination of the problem by the DCI and the IAC. If the Strategy Board wished an Estimate to be provided it could easily refer the matter to Mr. Armstrong who would be in touch with the Central Intelligence Agency.

b. Trends of public opinion and the attitudes of influential groups in China: By and large it was considered that this is a problem to be answered mainly by the State Department's intelligence organization and that in handling this problem the State Department would normally at the working level consult with the other intelligence agencies and utilize their contributions. A division of opinion in this case, which was considered on the face of it probably less than a National Intelligence Estimate, would be treated by the consumer in the same way that the President treats the division of opinion that appears in regard to a National Intelligence Estimate. It was indicated that the best way of handling this problem would be to levy it in writing with Mr. Armstrong.

4. At the conclusion of this discussion it was agreed that language proposed by Mr. Jackson would be satisfactory for incorporation in the paper which is in preparation for the National Security Council. This language is as follows:

"In accordance with general principles to be worked out between the NPSB and the heads of the five intelligence agencies, the CIA will see that appropriate intelligence support is provided for psychological warfare and that the intelligence activities of government departments and agencies in this field are properly coordinated."

cc: Mr. Jackson  
Mr. Wisner

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

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